

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

"Day of the Dungeon Master"

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAINOUS AREA - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A peaceful scene; a lovely alpine area, with a few mountain goats gazing on the declivitous slopes, and patches of snow here and there. Suddenly ERIC dashes THROUGH SHOT, running full-out, a look of terror on his face as he glances back over his shoulder.

ERIC

Haalllp!!

A beat; then BOBBY, SHEILA, PRESTO, DIANA and HANK race THROUGH SHOT after him. Bobby is carrying UNI. All are, if not as terrified as Eric, certainly not happy.

OTHERS

(Ad lib)

Run! They're getting closer!
Hurry! Look out, Sis! (Etc.)

UNI

(Frightened BLEATS)

DIAL UP a fierce BUZZING; then several GIANT WASPS fly THROUGH SHOT in pursuit of the kids.

WIDE - MOUNTAIN CUL-DE-SAC

The kids run up against a sheer cliff -- there's no place to go. They turn at bay as the wasps BUZZ INTO SHOT, swooping around them.

CLOSER - FAVORING ERIC

He cowers behind his shield, which glows as a wasp SLAMS its stinger against it.

ERIC

Go away! I didn't mean to
bounce a rock off your nest!
I'm sorry! Really!

ON DIANA

Fending off another wasp with her staff.

DIANA
I don't think you're getting
through to them, Eric!

ON HANK

He lobs off two energy arrows in quick succession.

ON WASPS

Coming in like Zeroes -- the arrows streak INTO SHOT and wrap fiery lines about the wasps' wings, pinning them. PAN TO FOLLOW the wasps falling to the ground, where they lie helpless, legs twitching.
SFX: ANGRY BUZZING.

ON BOBBY

Uni hides behind him as he swings his club menacingly at another wasp.

BOBBY
Buzz off, bug-brain!

UNI
("Yeah!")

ON SHEILA

A wasp flies toward her; she pulls her hood over her head, ducking down as she does so, and becomes invisible. The wasp COLLIDES with the cliff behind her, and rebounds dizzily. PAN to another section of the cul-de-sac, where Sheila reappears.

ON ERIC

Doing his best to fit his entire body under his shield. Several wasps BUZZ about him.

ERIC
Somebody do something, for
cryin' out loud!

One of the wasps seizes his shield and begins to fly upward with it. Eric finds himself in a tug-of-war.

ERIC (CONT)
(Frantic)
Hank! Presto! Anybody! Do
something!!

ON PRESTO

Hiding under a rocky overhang as several wasps BUZZ about him. He gropes frantically in his hat, and after a moment, pulls out an electric fan. He looks at it in disgust.

PRESTO

No doubt about it -- I gotta
get a new hat!

He tosses the fan O.S.

ON FAN

It lands upright, and begins to blow, producing a GALE-FORCE WIND.
PULL BACK to show the wasps being blown away -- literally.

WIDE ANGLE - ALL

As they watch the wasps go sailing over the horizon. Presto puts
his hat back on. They all look down at Eric, who's still cowering
under his shield. PUSH IN on Eric.

ERIC

(Muffled)

Are they gone?

DUNGEON MASTER (O.S.)

Yes, Cavalier -- they are
gone.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eric sits bolt upright and reacts in exasperation as DUNGEON MASTER
steps out from a small cleft in the cliff.

ERIC

Oh, terrific! Where were you
when we needed an exterminator?

WIDE - ALL

Dungeon Master looks somewhat taken aback at this outburst.

DUNGEON MASTER

(Mildly)

There are many matters that
require my attention, Cava-
lier. A Dungeon Master's
life is not an easy one.

TWO SHOT - ERIC AND DUNGEON MASTER

Eric gets to his feet and glares at Dungeon Master.

ERIC

Don't give me that! You've
got all this power, and you
never use it! Boy, if I were
Dungeon Master, I'd have it made!

Dungeon Master considers this.

DUNGEON MASTER
What an interesting proposition! And it's true I could use a rest . . .

WIDE - ALL

Dungeon Master looks up at Eric and smiles.

DUNGEON MASTER (CONT)
Very well, Cavalier -- I accept your offer!

The kids look at each other, perplexed -- Eric most of all.

HANK
Excuse me, Dungeon Master, but -- what offer?

ON DUNGEON MASTER

He looks quite jolly, grinning from ear to ear.

DUNGEON MASTER
Why, to make our young friend Dungeon Master for a time, of course! It will give me a much-needed rest!

ON KIDS

They look at each other, then at Eric, in total disbelief. As for Eric, he can't believe his ears.

ERIC
(Incredulously)
Me -- Dungeon Master?!

DUNGEON MASTER (O.S.)
Yes indeed! I shall give you my power, to use as you will!

PRESTO
(To Dungeon Master)
You gotta be kidding! I wouldn't trust Eric to do card tricks!

TWO SHOT - ERIC AND DUNGEON MASTER

Dungeon Master faces Eric, and raises his hands. Eric backs up nervously until he's against the cliff wall.

ERIC

Now wait a minute -- can't we
talk this over?

Twin BEAMS OF POWER lance from Dungeon Master's hands, bathing Eric in a shifting aurora of light. The light builds until it's blinding. SFX: POWER CRACKLING.

ON REST OF KIDS

Watching. They shield their eyes. Uni shrinks back up against Bobby. VERT. PAN up the length of the cliff face, to its crest. SHADOWDEMON appears over the top of the cliff. He peers down O.S.

ON ERIC AND DUNGEON MASTER

The aurora fades, and we see that Eric is now garbed in robes similar to Dungeon Master's. His shield is gone. He looks at himself in astonishment.

ERIC

I don't feel any different . . .

DUNGEON MASTER

(Cryptically)

That may change -- in time.

(Beat)

Now you must learn to wield
the power within you.

ON ERIC

Something of his old cockiness returns; he swaggers a bit.

ERIC

Sure! Piece of cake!

He SNAPS his fingers in an offhand gesture. SPARKLE EFX play about his fingers, and immediately a LIGHTNING BOLT STRIKES the ground beside him, causing him to antic comically.

ERIC (CONT)

Yike!!

ON REST OF KIDS

They hide smiles.

KIDS

(GIGGLES)

TWO SHOT - ERIC AND DUNGEON MASTER

Eric somewhat subdued. Dungeon Master looks at him sternly.

DUNGEON MASTER

Do not take your new abilities lightly, young Dungeon Master!

ERIC

(Subdued)

Right -- gotcha.

(Beat; briskly)

Boy -- Dungeon Mastering sure makes a guy thirsty!

He rubs his hands together briskly in a nervous, "What do I do next?" mannerism. SPARKLE EFX play about his hands, and a spring of water FOUNTAINS up from a crack in the ground beside him. Eric reacts in surprised pleasure to this. He leans forward to take a drink, but Dungeon Master makes a SPARKLING gesture, and the water vanishes. Eric reacts to this.

ERIC

Hey! What's the big idea?

ON DUNGEON MASTER

DUNGEON MASTER

You must realize that everything touches everything else. Actions have consequences.

ON OTHERS - FAVORING ERIC

DUNGEON MASTER (O.S. CONT)

Bring water here to quench your thirst, and you may be turning farmland into desert elsewhere.

ERIC

(Perplexed)

So how do I know what to do?

ON DUNGEON MASTER

He walks toward a snowbank.

DUNGEON MASTER

Travel west, and seek the Castle Darkhaven. It is there you will find the Golden Grimoire (GRIM-WAHR)..

The light of the two suns is reflecting off the snowbank, producing a dazzling glare. Dungeon Master walks into the glare, and is lost

to sight.

ERIC (O.S.)
Hey! What about my shield?

DUNGEON MASTER (V.O.)
Knowledge will be your shield.

ON KIDS

Squinting as they try to keep him in sight. No good -- he's gone.

SHEILA
He's gone again!

HANK
Yeah -- and this time I've
got the feeling he won't be
back for awhile.

Eric looks at the others.

ERIC
Hey -- don't sound so down!
Didn't you hear him? I'm
Dungeon Master now!

ANOTHER ANGLE

As the kids turn away from Eric and head O.S.

DIANA
We know, Eric -- that's what
worries us!

They EXIT SHOT. Eric follows, nonplussed.

ERIC
C'mon, guys -- give me a
chance!

As he EXITS, VERT. PAN to top of cliff, where Shadowdemon watches.
He flits O.S. in the opposite direction.

WIPE TO:

EXT. VENGERS CITADEL - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Brooding and atmospheric. PUSH IN as Shadowdemon flies toward it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VENGERS SANCTUM - LOW ANGLE ON DOORS

Shadowdemon emerges through the crack between the huge double doors.

SHADOWDEMON

My lord -- I have news that
may be of interest to you.

PULL BACK as VENGERS' boot steps INTO SHOT in extreme f.g.; then

WIPE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - WIDE ANGLE - DAY

PAN with the kids as they walk through lush meadowgrass. Eric is trying to keep up with the rest, and having something of a hard time -- he keeps tripping over his robes.

SHEILA

What do you suppose Dungeon
Master meant by "knowledge
will be your shield?"

Bobby jerks a thumb over his shoulder at Eric.

BOBBY

Ask Eric -- after all, he's
Dungeon Master now!

ANOTHER ANGLE

The kids stop and surround Eric.

DIANA

Okay, Eric -- what about it?

Eric hasn't the foggiest damn notion what it means either, but he's not about to let them know that.

ERIC

Uh, well, see, it's like this
-- these things are real complicated, and, uh, not easy
to explain . . .

DIANA

(Cutting him off)
In other words, you don't
know either.

PRESTO

What good is being Dungeon
Master if you don't know
anything about the job?

CLOSER ON THEM

Eric is getting miffed now.

ERIC
Who says I don't know any-
thing about it?

BOBBY,
You do -- every time you open
your mouth! Tell me one thing
you can do!

UNI
("Yeah!")

ERIC
(Hotly)
Okay, try this on for size,
short stuff -- if I'm Dungeon
Master, I can send us home!

The truth of this hits them all right between the eyes, and Eric is
as surprised as the rest of them. Silence for a beat while they
digest this.

CLOSE ON HANK

HANK
(Softly)
Sonuvagun! He's right!

PAN TO Eric. He looks down at his open hands, as though expecting
to see them smouldering with energy.

ERIC
(Wonderingly)
Wow! I can do it -- I know it!
(Beat)
I just don't know how -- yet!

ANOTHER ANGLE - ALL

PRESTO
Dungeon Master said to find
Castle Darkhaven -- and the
Golden Grimoire.
(Beat)
What's a grimoire?

DIANA
It's a book of magic! Maybe
it can tell Eric how to get
us home!

ERIC
Then what're we waiting for?
Come on!

PAN with them as they break into a run. PULL BACK AND UP to an OVERHEAD SHOT. Suddenly Venger's hand, huge in comparison to the kids, ENTERS SHOT, creating a RIPPLE EFFECT in the scene, DISSOLVING it into swirls of color.

CUT TO:

INT. VENGER'S SANCTUM - ON VENGER

The Lord of Darkness stands before a basin of shimmering water, which he has just stirred with his hand, washing away the scene we just saw. SHADOWDEMON hovers beside him.

VENGER

So -- the Golden Grimoire is
in Darkhaven! After all
these years, its secrets
will finally be mine!

SHADOWDEMON

Unless the young ones find it
first, my Lord!

CLOSER - VENGER..

The thought does not make him happy.

VENGER

Then we must make sure that
they do not! Come, Shadow-
demon!

He EXITS SHOT, followed by Shadowdemon.

WIPE TO:

EXT. ROCKY RIDGE - DAY - KIDS

Toiling along the narrow edge of a tor. Scrub brush and lichen decorate the rocks, and there is more snow here.

PRESTO

Just how far is it to this
castle anyway, Eric?

ERIC

How am I supposed to know?

PRESTO

Hey, you're Dungeon Master!

ERIC

Oh -- right!

CLOSER - FAVORING ERIC

He stops near the dark opening of a cave and draws himself up, trying to look cosmic.

ERIC
(To himself; sotto)
Let's see -- what would Dun-
geon Master say?
(To others)
You will find it -- unless it
finds you first!
(Uncertainly)
How was that?

The others are unimpressed.

DIANA
Needs work, Eric.

ON ERIC.

With the cave in b.g. Eric sulks slightly at Diana's remark.

ERIC
Aw, give me a break! Things
could be worse!

From the cave behind him emerges a huge YETI.

YETI
(ROARS)

It shambles toward Eric, who spins about, sees it, and reacts in comic terror.

ERIC
Yipe! See what I mean?

He turns to flee, but trips on his robes and goes sprawling full-length. The yeti stalks toward him.

ON OTHERS

They look at each other in amused exasperation. Hank extends a hand toward Bobby, offering him the honor.

HANK
Bobby?

Bobby shakes his head and leans on his club.

BOBBY
Naw -- you take it.

Hank raises his bow and fires two energy arrows O.S.

ON ERIC AND YETI

Eric getting progressively more tangled in his robes as he tries to get to his feet. The yeti is almost upon him when the energy arrow shoots INTO SHOT and DETONATES in front of it, dazzling the creature. The other arrow whips around him several times, trailing a fiery rope that pinions its arms to its sides.

YETI
(Frustrated ROAR)

CLOSER ON ERIC

Eric, who has wrapped his head in his arms, looks up in surprise, then scrambles to his feet.

ON REST OF KIDS

As Eric stumbles INTO SHOT.

BOBBY
(Sarcastically)
Way to go, Dungeon Master!

ERIC
(Angrily)
You didn't give me a chance!

Hank raises his bow and nocks another arrow, preparatory to aiming it O.S.

HANK
I could let him go, Eric --

Eric reacts nervously to this.

ERIC
(Hastily)
No, no -- that's okay!
(Remembering his new station)
I mean -- you acted wisely, Ranger!

Hank shakes his head and walks O.S. The others follow. VERT. PAN up to the sky, where we ZOOM IN on two tiny dots that become Venger, astride NIGHTMARE, and Shadowdemon. They look down O.S.

VENGER
So -- the Cavalier now masquerades as Dungeon Master!
How amusing!

CLOSER ON VENGER

He raises a hand, and dark, roiling smoke rises from his palm.

VENGER (CONT)

Let us see if his magic can
deal with a sorcerer's storm!

PULL BACK as the smoke grows bigger, becoming dark, ominous
thunderheads in which BLACK LIGHTNING CRACKLES. SFX: THUNDER.

WIDE ANGLE - KIDS

Making their way along the ridge. They look up and react as the
storm quickly takes over the sky.

SHEILA

Looks like we're in for a
storm!

UNI

("Uh-oh!")

CLOSE ON ERIC

He looks up at the clouds, uneasily. This is not his usual fear
reaction -- rather, it comes from a sudden, disturbing realization.

ERIC

This is no ordinary storm.
It's Venger's doing!

PULL BACK to include the others, who look at him in surprise.

HANK

How can you be sure?

ERIC

I dunno -- but I am! Take
cover -- now!

ANOTHER ANGLE

They scatter as a BLACK THUNDERBOLT STRIKES the ground where they
stood. SFX: THUNDER.

ON KIDS

Running. More BLACK THUNDERBOLTS STRIKE, just missing them.

OVERHEAD SHOT - DIANA

Running broken-field as THUNDERBOLTS ZAP the ground all around her,
narrowly missing. She pole-vaults over a chasm with her staff.

ON HANK, SHEILA, UNI

Uni leaps into Sheila's arms as they run from the THUNDERBOLTS. One STRIKES a natural stone bridge over a chasm that they're about to cross, destroying it just before they can reach it. Hank fires an energy arrow that arcs across the chasm, forming a new bridge, and they run over it.

ON BOBBY AND PRESTO

Running full-out from the THUNDERBOLTS. Presto reaches into his hat and pulls out an umbrella, which he holds over his head as he runs.

ON ERIC

A THUNDERBOLT SMASHES into the ground beside him, knocking him down. He instinctively raises his shield arm, then stops as he remembers he no longer carries the shield. Desperately, he thrusts out his other arm. A BOLT of blinding power ZAPS from it, up O.S.

ON STORMCLOUDS

The POWERBOLT STRIKES the dark clouds, evaporating them. Within seconds, the two suns are shining in a blue sky again.

WIDE - KIDS

They slowly gather around Eric, who gets to his feet. He looks as surprised as they do.

HANK

What did you do, Eric?

ERIC

I'm not sure . . .

BOBBY

Boy, it sure worked, whatever it was!

PUSH IN on Eric -- all this is happening a bit too fast for him.

CUT TO:

AERIAL SHOT - VENGER AND SHADOWDEMON

Venger on Nightmare. They both hover, looking down O.S.

SHADOWDEMON

The lad has much power, my Lord!

VENGER

True -- but he is inexperien-

VENGER (CONT)
ced. It will do him no good.
(Beat)
Still, while this is enter-
taining, it serves no pur-
pose. Best to seek Dark-
haven, and the Grimoire.
Come, Shadowdemon!

He wheels Nightmare about, and flies O.S. Shadowdemon follows.

WIPE TO:

EXT. MOUNTAINS - ON KIDS - DAY

Making their way over yet another ridge.

PRESTO
There's gotta be a quicker
way to get to Darkhaven!

He stops, and fumbles in his hat.

PRESTO (CONT)
Maybe I can pull something
out of the old sombrero here!

He pulls out a large persian rug.

BOBBY
All right! A flying carpet!

But before anyone can climb on, the carpet suddenly sprouts wings
and flies away O.S.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The kids watch it go. Presto is downhearted.

PRESTO
I should've known.

Eric turns to the others confidently.

ERIC
Leave it to the ol' Dungeon
Master, guys!

DIANA
Yeah? What're you gonna do
-- whistle up a 747?

ON ERIC

He considers it, then shrugs.

ERIC

Why not?

He purses his lips and WHISTLES as though hailing a cab.

ERIC (CONT)

(WHISTLES)

WIDE - ALL

The WHISTLE ECHOES and REVERBERATES about them. Then there's a SHRIEK like a sheet of metal being ripped in half, and the O.S. SOUND of mighty WINGS. The kids look around apprehensively.

SHEILA

Eric -- what've you done now?

ERIC

Don't worry -- everything's
under control!

(Beat; uncertainly)

I hope!

ANOTHER ANGLE - KIDS

As from the depths beyond the narrow ridge they're walking on rises a gigantic ROC -- a bird the size of a Lear jet. The WIND from its wingstrokes nearly blows them off the ridge; they hang on to rocks and to each other desperately. The roc SCREECHES again, then settles down on the ridge, not far from them.

CLOSER ON THEM

The roc bows its head submissively, as though inviting them to climb aboard. The kids stare at it in awe, then look at Eric. Eric's as surprised as they are, but tries to conceal it.

ERIC

All aboard Trans-Realm Air-
lines!

He climbs aboard the roc's back.

ANGLE ON KIDS

They look nervously at the gigantic bird. Presto reaches in his hat and pulls out a Saltine, which he holds out timidly.

PRESTO

(Nervously)

Polly want a cracker?

DIANA

(To Eric; incredulously)

You want us to ride that?

HANK

Wait a minute -- maybe Eric
knows what he's doing. Any-
way, it beats walking!

ANGLE ON ROC

Hank climbs onto the roc's back. After a bit of hesitation, the
others follow. The roc spreads its huge wings and takes to the sky.

AERIAL SHOT - ROC

Flying; the kids riding comfortably on its back.

PRESTO

Not bad, Eric!

DIANA

Yeah -- you just might make a
good Dungeon Master yet!

Suddenly a huge gout of FLAME washes THROUGH SHOT behind the roc,
singeing its tailfeathers. The kids sprawl full-length to avoid it,
and the roc SCREECHES in surprise.

ERIC

You mean if I live that long!
Look!

He points O.S.

THEIR POV - RED DRAGON

A huge RED DRAGON, as large as the roc. It ROARS as it swoops
around for another attack.

HANK (O.S.)

A red dragon! It's attacking
the roc!

SHEILA (O.S.)

Yeah -- and that means it's
attacking us, too!

WIDE ANGLE - RED DRAGON AND ROC

The red dragon swoops in for another attack, and the roc prepares to
fight, as we

FADE OUT

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. REALM - WIDE-ANGLE AERIAL SHOT - ROC - DAY

The roc banks as the red dragon swoops INTO SHOT again, breathing another FIREBLAST at the roc. The kids hang on for dear life.

HANK

Hang on!

ANOTHER ANGLE

The roc SCREECHES and dives; the FIREBLAST narrowly misses it.

CLOSER ON ROC

The kids and Uni are hanging onto the feathers on the roc's back as the b.g. weaves and dips crazily behind them.

DIANA

Do something, Eric!

CLOSE ON ERIC

He looks up and reacts.

HIS POV - RED DRAGON

Coming straight for us.

ERIC (O.S.)

(Panicky)

This wasn't in the job description!

He buries his head in his arms.

WIDE - ROC

It drops as another FIREBLAST from the dragon just misses it.

CLOSER - KIDS

The b.g. tilts around them as the roc banks steeply.

PRESTO

There's only one thing to do
-- abandon bird!

ON ROC - MOVING

The kids drop off and fall O.S.

KIDS

Wooaahh!!

UNI

(BLEAT of fear)

AERIAL SHOT - KIDS - FALLING

The kids tumbling through the air. Bobby holds Uni.

BOBBY

Get us out of this, Eric!

ON ERIC - FALLING

He rubs his hands together, CLAPS them, makes various cabalistic gestures -- all to no avail.

ERIC

It's not working!

ON PRESTO - FALLING

PRESTO

Oh, that's just swell!

He passes his hand over his hat.

PRESTO (CONT)

Hocus Pocus, Alakazat -- do something quick, before we go splat!

The interior of the hat glows; then nylon rigging springs out of it, flapping O.S.

WIDE - ALL EXCEPT ERIC - FALLING

The kids grab hold of the rigging; Presto hangs onto his hat. Suddenly a huge parachute, big enough to support all of them, unfolds out of the hat and billows open above them.

ON ERIC - FALLING

He's too far from the rigging; he makes a frantic grab for it, but no good -- it's snatched up and away from him as the parachute arrests its fall. Eric falls down O.S.

ERIC

(Dwindling)

Hey! What about me?

ON REST OF KIDS - DESCENDING

Floating safely down. They look down in horror.

THEIR POV - ERIC - FALLING

Xeroxing away from us, toward the ground.

HANK (O.S.)

He's gonna hit!

ON HANK - DESCENDING

Holding onto the rigging with both hands, his bow across his back. He draws his legs up and entangles them in the rigging, then lets himself dangle upside down. He aims the bow down O.S. with his free hands, and fires a volley of energy arrows in quick succession.

ON ERIC - FALLING

Frantically trying different gestures; nothing works. The arrows STREAK THROUGH SHOT past him.

ON GROUND

The arrows STRIKE, one after another, forming a glowing cushion of energy just in time; Eric lands in it with a WHUMP!, splattering globules of radiant energy everywhere.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The glow dies down; Eric is sitting safely in f.g., looking somewhat dazed. The rest of the kids drift down INTO SHOT and land safely.

WIDE ANGLE

They join Eric, who looks considerably morose.

HANK

Hey, don't look so glum!
You're alive!

ERIC

(Glum)
Yeah -- thanks to you.
(Beat)
Some Dungeon Master I am --
can't even save myself from
going pancake city!

SHEILA

(Comforting)
It's okay, Eric. Learning to
use powers like that takes
time.

ERIC

I guess.

(Beat)

Well, so much for taking the
high road to Darkhaven. C'mon
-- let's go.

He trudges O.S. PUSH IN on the others as they look at each other.

HANK

He just fell on his pride.
He'll be okay.

DIANA

(Worried)

I hope so.

They follow him.

WIPE TO:

EXT. ROCKY HIGHLANDS - WIDE ON KIDS - DAY

Toiling up toward the crest of a small ridge.

PRESTO

How far is it to this castle,
anyway? We must've walked
halfway across the Realm by
now!

BOBBY

Yeah -- I'm tired, an' my
feet hurt, an' I'm hungry!

UNI

("Me too!")

TOP OF RIDGE

The kids coming up on it, about to crest it.

SHEILA

What if we took a wrong turn
or something? We might miss
Darkhaven!

They come up over the ridge, and look down O.S. They react in
dumbfounded astonishment and awe at what they see.

WIDE PANORAMIC SHOT - DARKHAVEN

The kids are tiny little dots on the ridge, looking down on an
immense plain. Below them lies Castle Darkhaven. It is an ocean of

masonry, the size of a good-sized town; a sprawling, unbelievable gothic Gormenghast that stretches almost to the horizon. The roof-scape is all gables, towers, parapets, bartizans, domes, fenestrated walls, colonnades, and other structures: a stone world. It is ominously silent and brooding; no smoke curls from the chimneys; windows are dust-coated or broken, with only darkness behind them; spires and walls are broken and crumbling.

DIANA (V.O.)

(Awed)

I think it's gonna be kinda hard to miss, Sheila!

WIDE ANGLE - DOORS OF DARKHAVEN

They are gigantic. The kids approach them.

HANK

(Awed)

It's as big as our home town!

DIANA

Yeah -- and a lot less friendly-looking!

CLOSER - DOORS AND KIDS

Favoring Eric and Bobby. Bobby raises his club.

BOBBY

Guess I'd better knock!

Eric is looking at the doors with a puzzled expression, as though trying to remember something long-forgotten. He thrusts out one robed arm, checking Bobby's upraised club. When he speaks, his tone and cadence are similar to Dungeon Master's, though in his own voice.

ERIC

(A la Dungeon Master)

Wait, Barbarian! These doors cannot be broken!

Bobby looks at him in confusion, as do the others.

BOBBY

Huh?

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eric makes a gesture, accompanied by SPARKLE EFX. A beat; then the massive doors CREAK slowly open.

INT. HALL OF DARKHAVEN - LONG SHOT - DOORS

A gigantic hall, dimly lit, full of dust and cobwebs. The decor and style are appropriately dark and brooding; huge obsidian sculptures and statues line the walls, as well as broken furniture. A rat runs, CHITTERING, in f.g., away from the sunlight that floods through the opening doors. SFX: CREAKING. PUSH IN on our group, framed in the doorway, their shadows stretching out before them. They are looking at Eric in surprise.

SHEILA

You sounded just like Dungeon
Master then!

Eric blinks and shakes his head, as though momentarily dazed.

ERIC

Hey, there's no need to be in-
sulting!

He enters Darkhaven, moving O.S. The others look at each other dubiously, and follow.

WIPE TO:

EXT. DARKHAVEN ROOFSCAPE - ON DOME

A sphere of mystic force is hurled from O.S., and SHATTERS a stained-glass dome. Then Venger, astride Nightmare, flies INTO SHOT and into the dark interior of the castle, followed by Shadowdemon.

VENGER

Hurry, Shadowdemon!

INT. DARKHAVEN CORRIDOR - LONG SHOT

Venger lands Nightmare on the floor and GALLOPS up the length of the corridor, followed by his servant.

VENGER (CONT)

We must reach the library
before our young friends!

WIPE TO:

INT. ANTECHAMBER - KIDS

In a relatively small chamber; like everyplace in Darkhaven, the mood is terminally creepy. It is dimly lit by one ray of light from a high lunette window. The mosaic floor is covered with dust. There is a door set in each of the four walls. The kids entered by one; they have a choice of three. They look about in confusion; then Hank turns to Eric.

HANK

I thought you said you knew
where you were going?

ERIC

(Defensively)
I do; I do!

He glances quickly about, then picks a door.

ANGLE ON DOOR

Eric strides to it and opens it. From our angle, we cannot see what's inside; we only hear a deafening BESTIAL ROAR. Eric reacts in comic fright and SLAMS the door shut, putting his shoulder against it. He grins cheesily back at the others.

ERIC

Heh, heh . . . not this one.

WIDE - INCLUDING OTHERS

Hank opens another door, revealing another corridor.

HANK

How about this one, Eric?

Eric dashes INTO SHOT, hastily straightening his robes in an unsuccessful attempt to look dignified.

ERIC

That's it! Let's go!

He strides through it; his robes catch on the door's latch and pull it shut, catching the robes. The others look at each other in reaction; Uni rolls her eyes in exasperation.

UNI

("Oh, brother!")

INT. CORRIDOR - ON ERIC

His robes are caught in the door. He gives a mighty pull on them just as the door is opened from the inside by Hank. Eric staggers back O.S., arms windmilling.

ERIC

Whooaahh!!

The others wince as there comes an O.S. CRASH! PAN to Eric, sitting among the pieces of a dusty, suit of armor. The helmet is on his head. He pushes up the visor and peers out, dazed.

ON KIDS

They look at each other in resigned amusement.

DIANA
Obi-wan Kenobi, he's not.

UNI
("Tell me!")

WIPE TO:

INT. REFECTORY - ON DOORS

A huge eating-hall, with dusty dishes and chafing trays still set on the long wooden table. The doors suddenly EXPLODE inward from a ball of mystic energy, and Venger stands framed in the opening. He looks about in anger.

VENGER
Bah! Another wrong turn! It
will take years to find the
Grimoire in a castle this size!

TWO SHOT - SHADOWDEMON AND VENGER

Shadowdemon moves closer to Venger.

SHADOWDEMON
(Silkily)
I suggest, my lord, that you
follow the children. If the
one called Eric now wears the
robes of a Dungeon Master,
then perhaps he has something
of the knowledge as well.

Venger considers this.

VENGER
Perhaps . . . but first we
must find them.

SHADOWDEMON
Leave that to me.

He flits up and O.S.

WIPE TO:

INT. HALL - ON STAIRCASE

The kids are descending a huge, winding staircase into the darkness of the hall below. Hank has an arrow nocked; its radiance provides light. Eric is leading.

HANK
(Dubiously)
You're sure this is the right
way, Eric?

ERIC
Hey, trust me! After all,
what's Dungeon Master got
that I haven't?

DIANA
Style, Eric -- style!

ERIC
Oh, very funny!

PULL BACK as they reach the bottom of the stairs, and stop in surprise. The hall is flooded with water -- the stairs continue down into the black lake.

BOBBY
Whatta we do now?

ANOTHER ANGLE - KIDS AND WATER

A large table floats by upside down -- its legs are stylized dragons.

HANK
If Eric says we go this
way --

He fires his arrow at the table; it wraps about one of the legs. Hank pulls on the fiery trail stretching from the bow to the table, hauling the table in.

ANOTHER ANGLE

HANK (CONT)
Then I guess we go this way!

The kids climb carefully onto the table. Diana pushes them off with her staff, and they float O.S.

ANGLE ON TABLE RAFT - MOVING

Floating slowly down the huge, unlit hallway. Hank fires an arrow up O.S.

THEIR POV - DARKNESS

The arrow BURSTS like a flare, providing eerie illumination ahead. We can see partially-submerged columns, carved archways and the like, contrasted against the black water. Very Dore'.

SHEILA (O.S.)
(Nervously)
This is spooky!

The flare's illumination slowly fades, leaving us in darkness.

ERIC (O.S.)
Don't worry! I'm telling ya,
there's nothing to be afraid
of!

ON RAFT

Dimly seen. Hank fires another flare O.S.

AS BEFORE - POV

This flare illuminates a frightening sight -- a pale, snarling giant looming up out of the water at one side of the hall, arms outstretched menacingly! (Its appearance should play off Eric's line.)

KIDS (O.S.)
(Ad lib horrified
gasps, etc.)

ON RAFT

The kids react in relief as the raft drifts past the menacing figure, which we now realize is only a giant marble statue.

HANK
(Relieved)
It's just a statue!

CLOSER - FAVORING ERIC

He spreads his hands in a "What did I tell you?" gesture. We can see the water and two of the table legs behind him.

ERIC
There -- see? No problems!

On his cue, two tentacles of a GIANT OCTOPUS rise from the water behind him, wrapping themselves around the table legs. Eric staggers, arms windmilling, as they give a mighty yank on the legs.

ERIC (CONT)
Whooaah!

WIDE - ALL

The tentacles start to drag the table under the water. The kids hang on, trying to keep from sliding off.

KIDS

(Ad lib)

Look out! Hang on! It's a
giant octopus! (Etc.)

ANOTHER ANGLE

The kids hanging on for dear life, as the table starts shipping water. The light from Hank's flare is beginning to fade.

ON ERIC

Feet braced against one of the legs of the table. Golden SPARKS OF POWER, like electrical arcs, begin to play between his two hands. He looks at them in wonder for a moment, then turns his hands outward, toward the tentacles wrapped around the table legs.

WIDE ANGLE

The SPARKS spread from his hands onto the tentacles, wreathing them in what looks like a CRACKLING ELECTRICAL DISCHARGE, which spreads over the tentacles and down under water. The tentacles release the table and withdraw under the water just as the light from the flare fades completely.

ON KIDS

They get to their feet as the table rights itself. Hank nocks another arrow for illumination.

HANK

Not bad, Eric!

Eric is not listening. He looks up O.S., as though listening to a voice only he can hear.

ERIC

We're here.

WIDE - ON RAFT

Eric makes a gesture. SPARKLE EFX surround the raft, and a column of water lifts it up O.S. like a huge shaft.

INT. PASSAGEWAY

A large, vaulted passage with a gaping hole where the floor has collapsed ages before. It is dimly lit by skylights. The table rises up through it, supported by the waterspout. The kids step off of it. Eric leads the way O.S.

ERIC

Follow me!

PRESTO
Anything you say, D.M.!

PAN with them to the arced doors of the library.

OVERHEAD SHOT - KIDS

About to enter the library. PULL BACK to include Shadowdemon, hovering near the coffered ceiling, which is painted with peeling frescoes.

SHADOWDEMON
They have found it!

He flies O.S.

INT. LIBRARY - CLOSE ON DOORS

They open, and the kids, led by Eric, enter. They stop, and all but Eric look about in awe; Eric acts like he's been here before. PULL BACK to establish the library of Darkhaven: a huge hall, the walls of which are lined from floor to high ceiling with shelves, on which are stacked and piled all manner of books: bound volumes with iron hasps, scrolls of parchment and vellum, enchiridons, clay tablets, and hundreds of others, all covered with dust. There are lecturns and tables scattered about the floor.

DIANA
(Awed)
Wow! How're we ever going to
find the Golden Grimoire in
all this?

PRESTO
(Dubiously)
Maybe there's a card catalog
. . .

ON ERIC

He walks down the hall to a section of shelving, and twists a candle sconce set in the wall. The bookcase CREAKS open, revealing a secret recess. The other kids crowd around and look in.

THEIR POV - RECESS

Just large enough to hold a huge, impressive tome, bound in gold. It glows softly. Eric's hands reach in and lift it; PULL BACK to show him holding it reverently.

ERIC
(Solemnly)
The Golden Grimoire!

ANOTHER ANGLE - KIDS

Eric opens the book, leafing through the illuminated pages. The others watch anxiously. Eric stops on a page.

ERIC (CONT)
(Softly)
This is it.

ANGLE ON ERIC

With the rest grouped behind him. He sets the grimoire on a lectern before him and steps back. He looks like he can't believe what he's about to do.

ERIC (CONT)
We're going home.

He starts to read. At first he's nervous and uncertain, stumbling over the unfamiliar words. At the first word, the book starts to glow with a warm, golden light.

ERIC (CONT)
(Reading)
"Duppira al-kushni, askupati
ani kalatum . . . "

As he continues, the golden glow intensifies, and begins to envelope him as well. Eric's voice gains power and certainty, reading in a strong, sure tone.

ERIC (CONT)
(Reading)
"Dulimeen kutulu, talgath
dini tobari . . . nithla
enyon dal palatan . . . "

ON REST OF KIDS

Watching him; the golden glow washes INTO SHOT, and the light in the library grows dimmer. ERIC'S V.O. CONTINUES. The kids look at one another nervously. Then Presto looks O.S., and reacts in astonishment. He points.

DRAMATIC LONG SHOT - KIDS AND LIBRARY

The library's the size of a cathedral, and almost totally dark now. As ERIC CONTINUES READING, the Portal -- a long, vertical LIGHT SLIT appears in the center of the room, like a gigantic door opening. DIAL UP WIND EFX; papers fly toward it. GOLDEN LIGHTNING CRACKLES up and down its length. This should be an awesome, numinous effect.

ON ERIC AND KIDS

Their hair and clothes being blown by the WIND; Eric's robes are billowing dramatically. He is suffused by the golden glow now, and he's not even looking at the Grimoire any more; it's like he knows the words by heart. There's a touch of REVERB in his voice -- almost as if the spell is reading him now, rather than the other way around. The kids watch him in mingled fear and awe.

ERIC (CONT)

(Reading)

"Ar-adumbar, elindil galad;
sauradak celebr telegin, tan
valinal pharazon!"

LONG SHOT - KIDS AND PORTAL

The Portal is slowly widening, and we can see, beyond it, the amusement park. It is night there, and deserted.

ON KIDS AND ERIC

The golden light fades from about Eric. His robes ripple in the WIND; he appears almost messianic. He looks at the others.

ERIC

We'll have to leave the weapons here.

The others hesitate, then lay them down.

ANOTHER ANGLE - KIDS AND PORTAL

With the doors in view behind them. They turn toward the portal. Bobby crouches beside Uni, hugs him, then looks up at Eric.

BOBBY

Can't I take her, Eric?

ERIC

I'm sorry, Bobby. She wouldn't survive in our world.

ON BOBBY AND UNI

Bobby hugs Uni again, then stands.

BOBBY

(Tearfully)

Good-bye, Uni. I'll miss you.

UNI

(Sad BLEAT)

AS BEFORE - KIDS AND PORTAL

They turn toward the Portal. WIND EFX are still blowing, and the light still glowing. They step forward, away from the pile of weapons -- and then the doors of the library are BLOWN off their hinges by an EXPLOSION of mystic force. They wheel about in shock, to see Venger framed in the shattered doorway. Shadowdemon hovers behind him. Venger holds up one hand, which still CRACKLES with Kirbyesque energy. PUSH IN on him as he speaks.

VENGER

A most touching scene! What
a shame it is all for nothing!

He hurls a magic sphere O.S.

ON KIDS

They dive O.S. to either side as the sphere hurtles THROUGH SHOT and STRIKES the Portal. It EXPLODES, surrounding the opening with PYRO-TECHNIC energy, which begins to shrink the Portal. In a matter of moments it will close.

WIDE ANGLE - KIDS AND VENGER

The kids scramble to their feet and go for their weapons, but a CRACKLING ENERGY NIMBUS cast by Venger snakes the weapons across the floor to his feet.

VENGER

Your weapons are mine, now
-- as is the Golden Grimoire!

ON GRIMOIRE

Another ENERGY NIMBUS pulls it from the lectern and O.S., just as Eric makes a grab for it.

CLOSE ON KIDS

Eric turns to the rest of them. He pushes them back, toward the Portal.

ERIC

Hurry -- before it closes!
I'll hold off Venger!

Hank grabs him.

HANK

You're crazy! He's got our
weapons -- and the Grimoire!
What makes you think you can
stop him?

Eric is scared, and it's obvious -- but he also knows what he has to do.

ERIC
Because I have to -- because
I'm Dungeon Master!

He shoves Hank and the others back, then turns, ready to face Venger.

WIDE ANGLE - VENGER AND ERIC

The CRACKLING POWER of the closing Portal playing about both of them, highlighting them -- as dramatic and apocalyptic as we can make it. The weapons lie before Venger, as does the Grimoire.

VENGER
Give up, boy -- now, and I
will let you live!

ERIC
(Scared, but
defiant)
Not a chance, Hornhead! C'mon
-- take your best shot!

ON VENGER

He raises his hand. A sphere of demonic force forms around it.

VENGER
(Angry)
You fool! You think this is
a game?

He hurls the sphere O.S.

VENGER (CONT)
This is no game!

ON ERIC

He raises his hands; a barrier of golden energy forms between them, but Venger's magic SMASHES through it, staggering Eric, knocking him backward.

ON KIDS

Standing at the Portal, which is barely large enough to get through now.

PRESTO
We've got to do something!

HANK

Diana -- can you reach our weapons?

DIANA

I can try!

She runs O.S.

ON ERIC

He's still standing -- he aims his arm O.S., but nothing happens. He stares at his hand in shock.

ERIC

Aw, no! Not now!

Another magic sphere from O.S. knocks him off his feet. PAN with him as he's slammed back against the shelves, knocking several books down.

ON VENGER

Stalking forward ominously, slinging magic spheres like a Ditko sorcerer, each throw punctuating his words.

VENGER

Did you really think a strip-ling like you could be Dungeon Master? It is the last mistake you will ever make!

ON ERIC

Trying frantically to dodge the magic spheres that EXPLODE about him. He manages to get to his feet, but is knocked down again.

WIDE ANGLE

Venger moves THROUGH SHOT, away from the pile of weapons. PUSH IN on an overturned table, and Diana crouching behind it.

DIANA

It's now or never!

Diana leaps from behind the table, going for the weapons.

ON SHADOWDEMON

He looks down O.S. and reacts.

SHADOWDEMON

Venger! The weapons!

ON VENGER AND ERIC

Eric lying in a huddled heap, surrounded by piles of books. Smoke rises from the books. Venger towers over him. He spins about at Shadowdemon's warning.

VENGER
(Awesome wrath)
Stop!

He hurls a magic sphere O.S.

ON DIANA AND WEAPONS

The sphere EXPLODES IN SHOT; Diana does a dive roll over it and comes up beside the weapons. She grabs Bobby's club and throws it O.S.

DIANA
Catch, Bobby!

ON KIDS

Bobby grabs the club, swings it and SMASHES it into the floor. CAMSHAKE and RUMBLE.

ON VENGER AND ERIC

The floor SHAKES, and Venger loses his balance momentarily.

ON DIANA

She flings Presto's hat, Sheila's cloak and Hank's bow O.S. Then she grabs her staff.

ON KIDS

They catch the weapons.

ON VENGER

He hurls another magic sphere O.S.

ON KIDS - FAVORING HANK

He quickly fires an energy arrow O.S.

ON DIANA

She ducks as the arrow strikes the sphere before the latter can hit her, DETONATING it in mid-air.

DIANA
Good shot, William Tell!

ON VENGER AND ERIC

Eric still lying on the floor. Venger turns and addresses the O.S. kids.

VENGER

Enough of this! I see I
must finish you all now!

Both of his hands glow with power. PUSH IN on Eric as he stirs, and rises on one elbow. His robes are tattered and scorched, and smoke rises from them. He looks O.S. and sees what's about to happen.

ERIC

No!

ANOTHER ANGLE - ERIC AND VENGER

Eric rises on one knee and aims both arms at Venger. Twin BLASTS of golden light lance from them, striking Venger and knocking him off balance. Venger turns toward Eric.

VENGER

Very well -- you shall be
first!

ON KIDS

Eric fires another arrow.

ON VENGER AND ERIC

Without even looking, Venger waves his hand, creating a magic shield against which the arrow EXPLODES harmlessly. He extends his other hand, glowing with energy, toward Eric.

CLOSE ON ERIC

This is it, and he knows it -- he looks about desperately, then spies something O.S.

HIS POV - THE GRIMOIRE

Lying a few feet away.

DUNGEON MASTER (V.O.)

Knowledge will shield you.

ON ERIC AND VENGER

Eric dives O.S.; Venger's magic sphere EXPLODES where he was lying. Venger turns and hurls another sphere after him.

ON ERIC

He lands next to the book, grabs it up and holds it in front of him like a shield. The sphere strikes the book, and EXPLODES.

VENGER (O.S.)
The Grimoire! No!

ANOTHER ANGLE - ERIC

Eric drops the Grimoire as it turns incandescent, the shape of the book lost in a PULSING GOLDEN GLOW that grows, expanding outward. Eric runs O.S., fleeing from it.

ON DIANA

She runs also as the GLOW spreads INTO SHOT.

ON VENGER

He staggers back, his arms crossed before his face.

VENGER
(Cry of fear)

ON SHADOWDEMON

He turns and quickly flees through the broken doors.

ON REST OF KIDS

As Eric and Diana join them.

ERIC
Let's get out of here! The
whole place is gonna go!

SHEILA
What about the Portal?

They look O.S. PAN to the Portal, just as it blinks out of existence.

BOBBY (O.S.)
It's gone!

ON KIDS - FAVORING PRESTO

He makes mystic passes over his hat, which glows from within.

PRESTO
Yeah -- and so are we! Hang
on!

A WHIRLWIND of mystic force envelopes them, and they vanish as the

GLOW WASHES OUT FRAME.

EXT. DARKHAVEN - WIDE - DAY

The WHIRLPOOL reappears on the rocky crest overlooking Darkhaven, and deposits our kids there. They look down as GOLDEN LIGHT erupts from every window and opening of the gigantic castle, spreading out from one point near the center. The castle begins to CRUMBLE; towers fall, walls collapse, and the whole place just generally goes to hell as the light consumes it. APPROPRIATE SFX. A huge cloud of dust rises, which coalesces into a gigantic, nebulous form of Venger. He looks down at them in anger, reaches toward them with one enormous hand -- then the cloud dissipates, and he's gone.

ON KIDS

Standing on the crest, looking utterly spent, Eric most of all.

SHEILA

(Sadly)

We almost made it that time.

ERIC

I'm sorry, guys. I blew it.

DUNGEON MASTER (O.S.)

Nonsense!

The kids turn and look O.S. in surprise. PULL BACK to include Dungeon Master, standing beside them.

DUNGEON MASTER (CONT)

You have done well, young
Dungeon Master.

FAVORING ERIC

He looks astounded.

ERIC

You're kidding! I mean -- I
fouled up sending us home --
I destroyed the Golden Gri-
moire --

ON DUNGEON MASTER

DUNGEON MASTER

But you were willing to lay
down your life for your com-
rades.

ON KIDS

They look at Eric warmly.

HANK
He's right, Eric. You saved
our lives.

ERIC
I did?
(Thinks about it)
Yeah, I did! Wow! Whatta
guy!

TWO SHOT - ERIC AND DUNGEON MASTER

Eric turns to Dungeon Master.

ERIC
Uh, Dungeon Master -- I mean,
don't think it hasn't been
fun, but -- I'd kinda like to
go back to being Eric the
Cavalier, if that's okay.

Dungeon Master smiles, and raises his hands. POWER EFX again, and
Eric is transformed back into his old self, complete with shield.
He looks at himself in relief.

ERIC
Oh, boy -- am I glad to be
outta those robes!
(Beat)
Uh, no offense, Dungeon Mas-
ter!

DUNGEON MASTER
None taken, Cavalier. Be
aware, however, that once you
are touched with the power,
you are never again quite the
same.

ON ERIC AND OTHERS

Eric reacts in surprised pleasure at this, and turns to face the
others.

ERIC
(To others)
Didja hear that? Maybe you
guys'll treat me with a
little more respect now!

He strikes a pose and SNAPS his fingers again. No lightning bolt
this time; instead, it begins to RAIN -- but only on Eric. Eric
reacts in annoyance, holding up his shield as an umbrella.

ERIC (CONT)

Hey, what's going on? Dun-
geon Master! Make it stop!

HANK

Some things never change,
Eric!

The rest of the kids all LAUGH, as Eric fumes; but this time the humor gets to him too, and though he tries to fight it, he can't; he breaks into a grin and LAUGHS too, as we

FADE OUT

THE END